

Vertical ID Program

Fact Sheet

Background

Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land implemented Michigan's Vertical Identification Program on July 1, 2003.

The program was created by Public Acts 553 and 554 of 2002, sponsored by former state Sens. Shirley Johnson and Loren Bennett. The laws require the Secretary of State to issue driver's licenses and ID cards in a vertical format to young adults under 21. The goal is to help prevent minors from purchasing alcohol, tobacco and other age-restricted products, keeping young adults safe on and off the road.

A coalition of nearly 30 agencies, associations and safety advocates joined Secretary Land in launching the "We Check to Protect" public awareness campaign in 2003.

Status

All driver's license and ID holders under 21 now have vertically formatted cards. The state has been phasing out horizontal cards for minors as they come into branch offices for new, renewal and replacement licenses and IDs. This means more than 731,000 of Michigan's 8.1 million driver's licenses and ID cards are now in vertical format.

- ▶ Vertical driver's licenses issued – over 584,000
- ▶ Vertical ID cards issued – nearly 147,000

Success

One indicator of the Vertical Identification Program's success is the steady decline in convictions under Michigan's "zero tolerance" law, which prohibits underage drivers from having any alcohol in their systems.

- ▶ 2004 – 1,693 convictions
- ▶ 2005 – 1,639 convictions
- ▶ 2006 – 1,439 convictions
- ▶ 2007 – 1,344 convictions

In addition, Michigan's recently released Drunk Driving Audit shows that all alcohol- and drug-related traffic fatalities are at their lowest point in more than 10 years.

(more)

Vertical ID Features

The redesigned format creates a more tamper-resistant design to deter attempted alternations or forgeries. The vertical cards also clearly list the dates when the license-holder turns ages 18 and 21, and include other security features such as the date of birth that overlaps a second photo of the license-holder, or “ghost” image, to prevent tampering with the date of birth.

Nationwide

About 13 states had vertical ID laws when Michigan implemented its program in 2003. Today, more than 20 states have such programs.

‘Zero Tolerance’ Law Penalties

Violating Michigan’s “zero tolerance” law carries stiff penalties:

First offense: Up to \$250 fine and or/up to 360 hours of community service.
 A 30-day driver’s license restriction.
 Four points on the driving record.
 \$500 Driver Responsibility fee for two consecutive years.

Second offense
within seven years: Up to \$500 fine and/or up to 60 days of community service and a
 maximum of 93 days in jail.
 A 90-day driver’s license suspension. Any prior drunken driving
 conviction results in a minimum one-year license revocation.
 Four points on the driving record.
 \$500 Driver Responsibility fee for two consecutive years.

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